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att to - ER - 8-9733

Approved For Release 2005/04/28 : CIA-RDP80B01676R001000120020-8

20 JAN 1957

BRIEF FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Research and Development Schedules for the USSR
Nuclear Weapons Program

1. The attached letter for your signature is in answer to queries by the Chairman of the International Committee on Internal Security regarding:

a. The earliest date on which the Soviets could have produced a nuclear weapon.

b. The status of the USSR nuclear weapons development program in 1949 and 1950.

2. The answer to 1.a. and other questions was provided verbally by reference to NIE 11-2-56 which is held by ICIS. The attached letter provides a more concise answer to 1.b. than can be obtained from NIE 11-2-56.



HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Assistant Director
Scientific Intelligence

25X1

Enclosure:
Letter to ICIS

NSC review(s) completed.

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ER-8-9833/a

2110 119 1200 1201

4 FEB 1957

Mr. J. Walter Yeagley
Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security
3327 Department of Justice
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Yeagley:

This letter is in reply to your inquiry of 18 January 1957 concerning the possibility that the USSR could have developed, and introduced into the United States, atomic weapons during the years 1949 or 1950.

I understand that you have been made aware of the test programs for Soviet weapons and that your remaining concern is that of the feasibility, from a technical viewpoint, of the production of components which could be introduced into the U.S. by clandestine means.

A technical evaluation of the nuclear weapons or devices which were tested by the USSR in 1949 and 1951 leads us to believe that their weapon program was in a highly developmental stage during this period. Any steps to produce components for clandestine shipment and emplacement would have been technically difficult, costly in fissile material, and carried out with a lack of confidence in the performance of the assembled device. A decision for such action in 1949 or 1950 would have been unsound from a research and development standpoint.

Sincerely,

SKHED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

Distribution:

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CONCURRENCES:

Assistant Director
Scientific Intelligence

Deputy Director

Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security

ICIS-125/450

3527 Department of Justice, Washington 25, D. C.

January 18, 1957

AWP/1-2

Honorable Allen Dulles
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dulles:

On December 19, 1956, the Director, FBI, wrote to the Director, Office of Security, Department of State, by memorandum entitled "Smuggling into the United States by Russians of Small Atomic Bombs, Internal Security - R". I received a copy of this memorandum and its distribution list indicates that you received a copy also. At a meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security scheduled for January 31, 1957, there will be discussion of the problems raised by this memorandum.

The usefulness of such discussion will be enhanced if we can have information by the time of the meeting on (1) the earliest date at which it is estimated that the Russians had developed an atomic bomb, and (2) the general status in 1949 of the Russian atomic weapons development and research program. I understand that National Intelligence Estimates of November 1956, on the Soviet Atomic Energy Program and on Soviet Capabilities for Attack on the Continental United States, Its Possessions and Key Overseas Bases, contain information pertinent to these questions. I should therefore like to request that these Estimates or appropriate sections of them and any other information which you consider relevant to my inquiry be made available prior to January 31.

Sincerely yours,

J. Walter Yeagley

J. Walter Yeagley
Chairman, Interdepartmental Committee
on Internal Security

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